

William T. Newcomb House
Pump Log Point Road
Truro
Barnstable County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MA-754

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

WILLIAM T. NEWCOMB HOUSE

HABS No. MA-754

Location This house is located on Pumplog Point, in South Truro, Barnstable County, Town of Truro, Massachusetts. This is at the end of Ryder Beach Road, between the Town Centers of Truro and Wellfleet.

Present owner F. Gerard Hobbs, 29 Lilly Lane, Dedham, Mass., and Miss Jean H. Hobbs, 60 Laurel Drive, Needham, Mass.

Present occupants Mrs. and Mrs. F. G. Hobbs; Miss Jean H. Hobbs.

Present use Summer residence.

Significance This is a Cape Cod "house and a half", 4 bay exterior, located within the area of the proposed Cape Cod National Seashore.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Original and subsequent owners Mr. Silas Clark, Wellfleet, Mass. Attorney, who has traced the titles of many of the houses in this area, related that the first recorded evidence of this property was in 1839. At that time, Wm. T. Newcomb sold cleared land, no buildings, to Atkin S. Rich, and in 1843, Rich sold the land with a building to Wm. T. Newcomb. Title then passed through Deborah Newcomb to Silas Ryder II, thence to his Widow Lucy, then to Emma A. Hobbs. Title now is in names of Jean and F. G. Hobbs, Jointly.

Mrs. Dorothy Schroeder, Ryder Beach Road, South Truro, said that her father James M. Ryder was born in this house. His parents were Silas and Lucy Ryder.

Mrs. F. G. Hobbs said that Frank G. and Emma A. Hobbs bought the property from the Ryders in 1936 or 37 and they said then that the house was 140 years old, or built in 1796.

Date of erection Unknown, however, the first known deed mentioned above in 1839 showed no buildings, and next deed in 1843 showed land with a building. Therefore, it is logical to assume that house was built between 1839 and 1843. The custom however on Cape Cod, from studies of similar houses, of moving houses from one location to another does not preclude the house being built before these dates and moved to its present location. Also, some of the original deeds to property in the area did not mention houses even though they were known to exist at the time of transfer of title.

Architect Unknown.

Builder Unknown.

Original plans None known to exist.

Alterations and additions Entry partition removed; butternut and small east bedroom partitions removed; ell addition added to west of kitchen, later moved to northeast corner of original kitchen and converted to modern kitchen, bathroom and dining area; hallway addition at west of house; knotty pine walls on second floor; dates of all of these alterations and additions are unascertainable.

Historical events connected with structure None discovered to date.

Important old views Present owner has photo of a painting in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, "Ryder's House", by Edward Hopper, 36 x 50.

Sources of information Mrs. F. G. Hobbs; Mrs. Dorothy Schroeder; Mr. Silas Clark. (addresses above).

Likely sources not yet investigated Truro Town Records; Barnstable County Records, although a court house fire of 1827 destroyed many of the early records prior to that date.

Prepared by Charles S. Dotts
Charles S. Dotts, Architect
HABS Cape Cod Survey I
August 22, 1960

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

GENERAL STATEMENT

Architectural interest and merit This is a Cape Cod "house and a half", 4 bay exterior, located within the area of the proposed Cape Cod National Seashore. Like most of the houses of early Cape Cod type, this house has been altered throughout the years. The exterior and parts of the interior however retain the early character of this type of house.

Condition of fabric Good.

THE EXTERIOR

Dimensions Original house, 28 x 28 feet.

Foundation Brick on wood sills.

Wall construction Probably post and beam. Exposed wall in garret revealed horizontal board sheathing with window framing of 2 x 4 studs which looked new. Exterior covered with white shingles, exposed 5".

Porches, stoops Concrete step on ground at south door, probably not original.

Chimneys One central brick chimney over center of original house; one brick chimney over kitchen ell.

Openings - doorways and doors 7 panel door at south or main entrance, wood, with glass in upper panel.

windows and shutters 9/6 double hung and 2/2 double hung, wood sash on first floor; 6/6 and small 2/2 on second floor, double hung sash. Glass about 6 x 8 inches. Louvered shutters, wood, some have very old appearance, and it is not known if these were original or not.

Roof - shape, covering, construction

Gabled, pitched, wood shingled cover; Construction is of 3 x 7 wood trusses, beaded edge, placed at 4'-0" on center and which rest on wood girts, dimensions unknown.

cornice, eaves Gabled, pitched, returns on gable ends. Narrow eaves.

dormers None.

THE INTERIOR

Floor plans Original house faced south in typical Cape Cod manner, with the entrance flanked on the east by a two window room and on the west with a one window room, 4 bays. Entrance is now into the west room, with removal of entry partition. There is visible evidence on the old entry floor of former stairs which led to the second floor. The north side of the original house probably housed the kitchen with the buttery and small bedroom to the east of it. The partitions have been removed and this area is now one large living area. At the northeast corner of the original kitchen is a modern kitchen ell with bathroom and dining area.

The second floor plan is probably the same as originally, with a bedroom located at the east, a smaller bedroom at the northwest and remainder an "open chamber" at the top of the stairs. There is a stone cellar under the east part of the original house and a modern concrete basement under the modern kitchen ell.

Stairways Wood, narrow steep stairs to second floor located in a hall just back of the west first floor room.

Flooring Random width pine boards, painted, about 9" to 15" wide.

Wall and ceiling finish Plastered and papered walls with plastered ceilings on first floor. Knotty pine walls, modern, on second floor. Wall board ceilings on second floor.

Doorways and doors 6 panel wood doors, 3/4" thick, in original part of the house.

Trim Square headed plain window and door trim in house, probably not original. Wide board wainscot to height of window stool in original part of house. Fireplace paneling in east room, first floor, mantel removed and fireplace blocked, as in original kitchen. There is good paneling on the west wall of the east bed room on the second floor.

Hardware Mostly modern.

Lighting Electric.

Heating No central heating. Original kitchen area fireplace rebuilt.

THE SITE

Orientation House faces south in typical Cape Cod manner, on a hill in cleared area.

Enclosures None.

Outbuildings Tool shed of wood, about 10 feet northeast of house; wood barn about 50 yards east of house.

Walks, driveways Driveway into yard, north side of house.

Landscaping Informal planting; fair lawn, very little shrubbery, few trees.

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